



SPINAL COURIER

Vol. 3 No. 4

July, 1992

Third Annual Conference Fills Gilbreath Center

Two hundred fifteen professionals, clients and their families attended the "Living with Spinal Cord Injuries in the 90's: Taking Responsibilities" conference this year. Sponsored by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, the conference was held on June 5, 1992 at the Gilbreath Conference Center, Baptist Medical Center, in Little Rock.

The highlight of this year's conference was Dr. Terry Winkler's fiery assessment of the health care system in his keynote speech.

If you missed this year's conference plan now to attend in 1993.



ARKANSANS HEAD TO BARCELONA

Six Arkansans are headed to Barcelona in late August to compete as members of the U.S. Disabled Sports Team at the IX Paralympic Games. The Paralympics are the premiere "Olympic Style" event for elite athletes with disabilities.

More than 3,000 Paralympic Athletes from 93 countries will compete at the Olympic Venues and stay at the Olympic Village during the games scheduled for Aug. 29 to Sept. 15, 1992. Five hundred athletes and staff will represent the USA. Included in that distinguished group will be four Arkansans with spinal cord disabilities, swimmer Grover Evans of Jonesboro and Basketballers Darren Schenebeck and Gary Woodring

of North Little Rock and Tim Kazee of Little Rock. Rounding out the Arkansas contingent are amputee James Coughlin and Head Basketball Coach Harry Vines, both of North Little Rock.

Woodring is the only Paralympic veteran in the group playing on the Gold Medal Winning Men's Basketball Team in Seoul, Korea at the 1988 games.

Evans, the first black swimmer to compete for the U.S. at the Paralympics (or the Olympics!) will compete in the 50 and 100 m free-style and the 25 and 50 m back-stroke. The US Basketball Team, like their Olympic counterparts is

an All Star team with 12 players from all over the U.S., putting together our own "Dream Team". "We have one goal" said Darren Schenebeck "win the Gold". Twelve teams are competing in the event with strong competition expected from Canada, France and Holland.

Network television is expected to provide spot reporting of the Paralympics, but no continuous coverage. A U.S. cable channel specializing in disability issues is covering the games, but it is not available in Arkansas.

Join the Spinal Cord Commission Members and Staff in cheering on our Paralympic Athletes. We're proud to have them represent us and look forward to them bringing back the gold.

SPINAL COURIER

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Executive Director

Thomas L. Farley
Editor

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BUCKLE UP!

SCHEDULE OF ASSCC FALL FISHING DERBIES

Magnolia

September 26, 1992

Southern Arkansas University at
Magnolia

Contact Annie Mcknight or Evelyn Wainright for details
(234-6219)

Hot Springs

To be scheduled in October, 1992
at Lake DeGray

Contact Bettie Tapp for details
(623-4479)

Pine Bluff

To be scheduled in September,
1992

Contact Bobby Johnson for details
(534-2993)

Crawford County

October 3

Shores Lake

Contact Kay Lynn for details
(782-4555)

Participants generally have to provide your own fishing pole and bait. Some food and drinks may be provided, call for details.

SPINAL COURIER Letters

Questions • Suggestions • Directions • Answers

Dear Editor:

I have been writing articles for the newsletter for about three years and have covered most of the topics that I consider to be important. It would be very helpful to me to hear from some of your readers about other subjects that they want to read about.

Shirley McCluer, M.D.

Let's help Dr. McCluer out folks. She really wants to hear from you. One suggestion that came in recently appears below. Editor

Dear Tom:

I would like to see Dr. McCluer write an article on transfer skills and techniques. In particular, I would like to have her describe a specific maneuver taught at Baptist Rehabilitation Institute. Some of my clients could benefit from this maneuver and alot of caregivers don't know about it.

Robert Griffin
ASSCC Case Manager

Route 66 Wheelchair Tennis Classic

Dear Editor:

The Route 66 Wheelchair Tennis Classic will be held this year at the Philcrest Tennis Center in Tulsa, OK on August 14-16, 1992.

The third annual Route 66 Wheelchair Tennis Classic is designed to provide an opportunity for wheelchair tennis players to gather and compete. It is also an excellent chance for the general public to become acquainted with the sport as it is played from a wheelchair. The tournament has been sanctioned by the Wheelchair Tennis

Players Association. Past tournaments have attracted athletes from Texas, Colorado, Missouri and Arkansas as well as Oklahoma. The tournament is sponsored by the Broken Arrow Medical Center's Rehabilitation program. For more information contact Marjorie Hathaway, Box 943, Broken Arrow, OK 74012-0943 or call (918) 455-3535.

Sharon McGovern
Broken Arrow Medical Center

Editor's note: Sharon left out the best part: cash! That's right, my sources tell me that a cash purse of \$2000 was awarded last year and this year the cash purse will be a minimum of \$2000! So, come on Arkansans, go get some of that Oklahoma money and bring it back to the natural state.

Cool Cukes & Quads

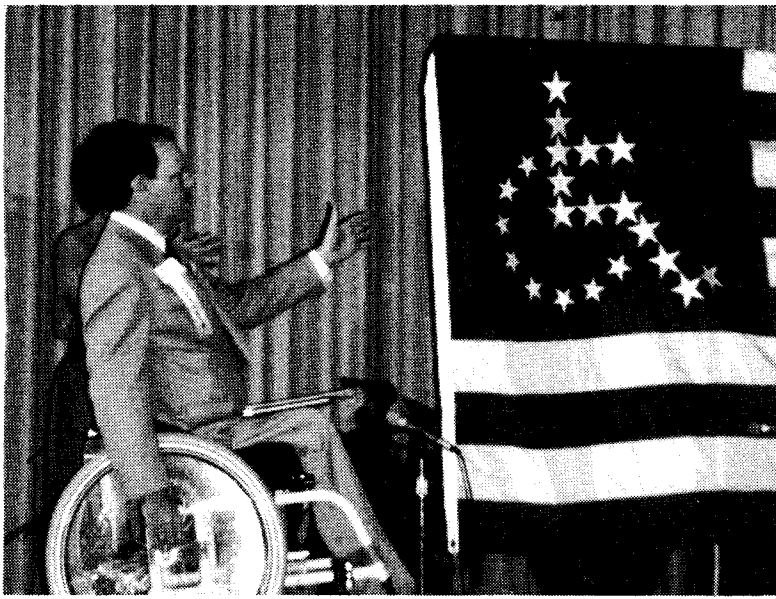
Dear Tom:

I want to remind everyone that, on average, one quadriplegic dies per year in Arkansas because of the heat! In most SCIs, it is not possible to sweat below the level of the injury and many quads cannot sweat above the injury. So, cooling the body by perspiration is not available or is limited for SCIs.

Quads, and paras too, should:
(1) avoid temperatures over 90° whenever possible, (2) stay in the shade not in the sun, and (3) if you must be in the sun or heat, keep a wet towel around the neck and wet the skin on face, arms and neck to permit evaporative cooling.

For more information ask your Case Manager for Fact Sheet 3, Heat Intolerance in Quadriplegics.

Shirley McCluer, M.D.



Dr. Terry Winkler gestures to the A.D.A.P.T. flag during his talk.



Dr. Smeltz talks about syringomyelia.

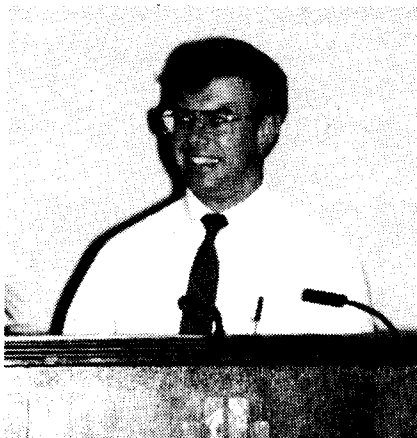


The exhibitor and vendor display area was a popular place to meet old friends and enjoy the refreshments.



The "Living for Today" panelists: (L to R) L. E. Sanders, Francis Burnett, Nita Krisell and William Dean.

Conference Photos 1992



Dr. Boop shares a laugh with the audience.



The "SCI Support Group" panel: (left to right) Larry Wilson, Danny Wooden, Chloe Bailey, moderator Martha Henderson, Janice Anderson and Mike Morissey.

ICAN OFFERS USED EQUIPMENT EXCHANGE

The Used Equipment Exchange is a FREE, public service that helps to match individuals who want to sell or loan adaptive equipment with individuals who want to buy or borrow adaptive equipment. The Used Equipment Exchange is sponsored by Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) which is a grant program funded through the Arkansas State Division of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Services.

Any type of adaptive device or equipment that may benefit a person with a disability may be listed.

The Used Equipment Exchange will list equipment for persons of all ages and all disabilities. Adaptive equipment may include; wheelchairs, walkers, commode seats, communication devices, computers, van lifts, etc.

The Used Equipment Exchange provides a means to sell or loan adaptive equipment that has been out-grown or is no longer needed. It also provides people with an opportunity to buy or borrow equipment that they need and may not otherwise be able to afford.

The Used Equipment Exchange is a computerized service that lists adaptive equipment to be sold or loaned as well as adaptive equipment that is being sought. Information from the Exchange is available upon request from ICAN and is published bimonthly in the ICAN Update.

Buyers and sellers are responsible for any sale or purchase that takes place as well as determining the condition of the equipment and its appropriateness. Buyers and sellers are responsible for all arrangements to transport equipment.

You may contact the Used Equipment Exchange by calling Voice/TDD (800) 828-2799 or (501) 666-8868.



Brittany Reeves shows her prize winning style at the Jonesboro fishing derby.

Jonesboro Fishing Derby

The ASSCC Jonesboro area fishing derby was held on June 5, 1992 at the Arkansas State University Lake. The turnout was good and everyone who fished caught something! Prizes were awarded to Terry Polston who caught the most fish of the adults and to Brittany Reeves who caught the most fish of the children. The delicious food and the mild weather provided an enjoyable day for all.

The Time to Think of Your Spine

Last month, many Arkansans were prompted to think about spinal cord injury and prevention. Governor Clinton officially designated June as Spinal Cord Injury Awareness month and individuals and organizations all across the state jumped on the bandwagon to help us spread the word. Coleman Dairy launched the public awareness campaign by printing the CHECK IT OUT BEFORE YOU DIVE! message on one million half-pint milk cartons delivered primarily to schools across the state. In addition, Coleman and the American Red Cross donated CHECK IT OUT! t-shirts to all the Arkansas State Parks lifeguards and those who received the ASSCC prevention training to wear while on duty.

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences assisted in the Kickoff by printing and distributing prom cards with safety messages for young persons this prom and graduation season. Twenty five thousand prom cards were tucked into corsage boxes and tuxedo pockets as a reminder to "buckle up and celebrate sober". Wholesale and retail florists and tuxedo rental stores volunteered their time to distribute the cards.

Doctors at Baptist Rehabilitation Hospital showed their concern by giving pre-printed "buckle-up" prescriptions to their patients. The

Spinal Cord Injury Team therapists also sponsored a hospital lobby display on the prevention of diving injuries.

Countless others including Northwest Arkansas Rehabilitation Hospital and Northeast Arkansas Rehabilitation contributed within their own organizations and to their special audiences. A special thanks to all of you for actively working to remind the community about the need to prevent spinal cord injuries.



Coleman Dairy of Little Rock distributed one million half-pint milk cartons with the CHECK IT OUT! diving message.

ASSCC Research Presented at ASIA

The Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission was well represented at this year's Eighteenth Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) in Toronto, May 8-10. This was the first year the conference had been held outside of the United States and the location in Toronto overlooking Lake Ontario was nice.

Only two prevention presentations from the United States were selected for presentation at this year's conference. One of these was "Harm's Way Spinal Cord Injury Prevention Program: An Evaluation of Effects on Related Prevention Knowledge and Behaviors" by Connie Carroll of the ASSCC. This paper was the result of a year-long evaluation of the Harm's Way injury prevention program presented by Kyle and Wendy Sharp to over 29,000 students in middle, junior, and senior high schools across the state during 1990. The paper was very well received and, as a result, copies of the evaluation have been requested by several groups including Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York City; the city of Vancouver, British Columbia; and the University of California at Berkeley.

Ms. Carroll and Cheryl Vines attended the conference. It was apparent from their contacts that Arkansas is one of the most progressive states in the country in the areas of spinal cord injury prevention and surveillance.

Special sessions were devoted to Canadian work in spinal injury treatment and prevention. The presentation of the "Heroes" prevention program, a production of the Injury Awareness and Prevention Center at the University of Alberta Hospitals received an International Gold Award at the Annual International Festival.

Gene Hamilton Retires

ASSCC Case Manager, Gene Hamilton, announced his retirement effective April 1, 1992. Mr. Hamilton has been employed as Case Manager in the Little Rock office for the past four years. His commitment in serving as an advocate for individuals with spinal cord disabilities will be missed.

The ASSCC staff gave Gene a "bon voyage" dinner June 3 at the Cock of the Walk Restaurant.

Cheryl Vines, ASSCC Executive Director, presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the Commission. Annie McKnight, Magnolia Case Manager and agency "poet laureate" read and presented Gene a poem written in his honor.

Gene is currently exploring the true meaning of the word retirement by working on his tan while doing some serious fishing.



Gene Hamilton gets some help in cutting his cake from secretary Loretta Decker (Left) and Dr. Shirley McCluer. Loretta baked the cake and it was delicious.

HIDDEN TREASURE ON THE LAKE

By Sharon Blake

I recently found a place in Kimberling City, MO on Table Rock Lake, that is designed to meet the needs of special people and their families. The entire resort was created to serve the physically challenged or older citizens with limited or non-walking abilities.

Concrete ramps to the boat dock makes fishing, boating or the complimentary pontoon boat rides enjoyable for the entire family. Add to this a nautical deck and living units with a two person Jacuzzi, two color TVs with remote, satellite/cable, full kitchen (microwave, dishwasher and coffee maker) and a private deck with barbecue and it sleeps six per unit. What more can you ask for? All you have to do is bring your favorite food and everything else is provided for you. There is a Pub and Galley so you don't even have to

cook if you don't want to.

I can tell you it was wonderful! You are only about 12 miles from the Branson shows and attractions, such as Shepherd of the Hills, Silver Dollar City, Andy Williams' Moon River theater and the Grand Palace to name just a few.

The name of this hidden treasure of the Ozarks is Captain Hook's Cove. It is open year round and for you bass fishermen it has some of the best looking bass I've seen right off the dock. Not to mention it is only about 45 minutes from the Pro Bass Shop.

The captain and his crew are interested in sponsoring a fishing tournament for the physically challenged. For more information, call me at Sue Smith Travel (501) 771-0987 or (800) 888-7117.

Fertility and Spinal Cord Injury

by
Shirley McCluer, M.D.
ASSCC Medical Director

Since spinal cord injury (SCI) occurs primarily in young adults, the question of fertility arises frequently. The effect of SCI on fertility is markedly different in males and females so they will be discussed separately.

Females

In order for females to be fertile, they must have ovulation (the release of an egg from the ovary), an open passage for the egg (ovum) to travel into the uterus through the fallopian tubes, and must be able to have intercourse for introduction of the sperm. The normal menstrual cycle (including ovulation) is regulated by hormones which travel through the body in the blood stream and therefore the menstrual cycle is independent of the nervous system. However, any type of physical or emotional stress can disrupt the menstrual cycle temporarily. Since a spinal cord injury is clearly very stressful, it is not surprising that some women will miss a few menstrual periods following injury. However, most women will resume their usual cycle within 3-6 months (i.e., if they were irregular before, they will probably continue to be irregular).

Spinal cord injury usually does not interfere with a woman's ability to have intercourse regardless of the level and severity of the injury. Therefore, it is important for a woman who expects to be sexually active to know that she is just as likely to get pregnant after SCI as she was before injury and she must consider contraception if she does not want to get pregnant. If she does want to have children, there are some special considerations for her doctor to be aware of, but no contraindication to pregnancy. For more details, request a copy of "Management of Labor

and Delivery for Patients with Spinal Cord Injury" by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists from your Case Manager or from the ASSCC Resource and Education Center in Little Rock.

Males

In order for males to be fertile, they must be able to produce and store large numbers of active sperm and deliver the sperm to a receptive female egg (through intercourse and ejaculation).

Sperm production. Males with spinal cord injury do not appear to have a problem with normal male hormone levels (testosterone) or the production and storage of sperm of sufficient quality and quantity for fertilization.

Intercourse. Intercourse is dependent on the ability to have an erection and erection is controlled by the nervous system. Following SCI, many individuals are still able to have an erection, but it may be significantly different from "normal" and may or may not be firm enough or last long enough for intercourse. When erections are not adequate for intercourse, there are some alternatives which may make intercourse possible, but would have no effect on fertility.

Ejaculation. Ejaculation is the means of delivering the sperm to the vagina and is a very complicated process that is controlled entirely by the nervous system. Several areas of the spinal cord are known to be involved in ejaculation (such as T10 - L2 and S2-4), but other areas of the nervous system, including the brain may also play a significant role.

Because of the complexity of ejaculation, any injury to the spinal



cord (whether high or low, complete or incomplete) usually prevents ejaculation from occurring spontaneously. This is unrelated to whether or not the individual has erections or can have intercourse. It is sometimes possible to have ejaculation without erection and some individuals have ejaculation with masturbation, but not with intercourse.

CAUTION: For anyone who is subject to Autonomic Dysreflexia (injuries above T-6), all forms of ejaculation (either spontaneous or stimulated) will probably cause dysreflexia! If you are having a problem with dysreflexia, see your physician for medication to prevent it. If you have an injury above T-6 and do not know what dysreflexia is, ask your case manager for a Medical Alert Card.

Men are very seldom able to have children following spinal cord injury because they are unable to deliver the sperm to the vagina with ejaculation. For men who are very anxious to have children there are some alternatives to consider, but the success rate is not very good. Research in this area is being done in several centers (unfortunately not in Arkansas) and maybe the results will be better in the future.

Alternatives: When ejaculation does not occur spontaneously, the most commonly used alternative in the research centers is to try to stimulate ejaculation artificially in order to collect the sperm, then transfer the sperm to the vagina at the time of ovulation (artificial in-

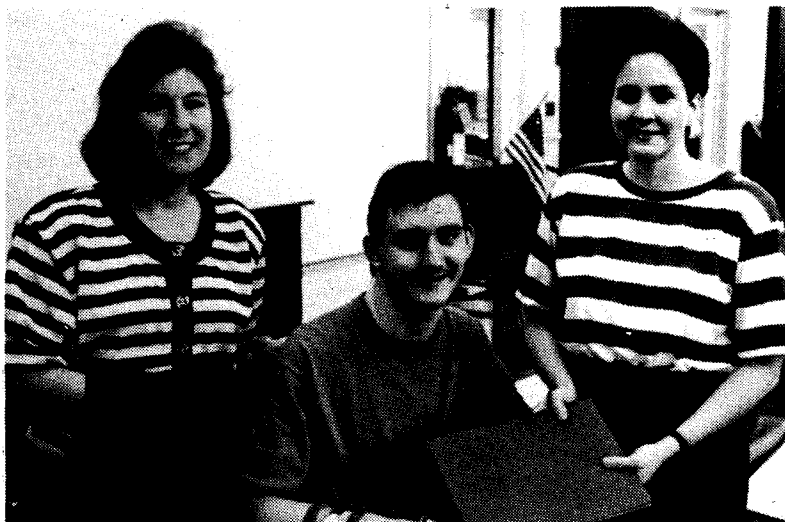
semination). This is essentially the same procedure that is used in animals, such as cattle. Several methods of stimulating ejaculation have been tried with varying degrees of success, dependent on the level and completeness of the spinal cord injury, the length of time since injury, the method of urinary management, and the number of episodes of acute urinary tract infections or epididymitis.

The two most commonly used methods of stimulating ejaculation are with a vibrator applied to the penis and with electrical stimulation applied through the rectum to the prostate area. Both methods have risks associated with them and should only be done by physicians who are very familiar with all aspects of spinal cord injury.

Summary Spinal cord injury has no significant effect on male hormone levels (testosterone) or on the ability to produce and store sperm. However, since ejaculation rarely occurs, fertility is a major problem. Efforts to achieve pregnancy by stimulating ejaculation followed by artificial insemination have been tried for many years, but they have been largely unsuccessful in producing live births.

There are now several centers in the U.S. (but not in Arkansas) doing research on SCI fertility, but despite improved techniques to collect sperm, the number of successful births is still quite small in these research centers. It is an expensive and time consuming process that involves not only obtaining active sperm but determining the time of ovulation in the female partner. Anyone seriously interested in this possibility should first read a book such as "How to Get Pregnant" by S.J. Silber, M.D. to understand what is involved before consulting a fertility program.

For further information about any specific aspect of this problem, please contact the Spinal Cord Commission.



Genita Malone (left), ABE instructor, and Lynne Tomlinson, GAE instructor, present Doug Middlesworth his GED diploma. (Photo courtesy Petit Jean Country Headlight)

Paralyzed in a motor vehicle crash several years ago Doug received his GED on May 7. His next goal is to complete college and become a rehabilitation counselor. Doug presented a challenge for the staff of the local adult education center. A new ramp was built and peer tutors were obtained to help Doug turn pages in his books and assist with other tasks most students take for granted.

In the process of reaching one goal, he set an example for others. Fellow able-bodied students were not inclined to complain or quit when someone with such physical limitations was determined to succeed. Congratulations Doug and good luck.

NEW PROGRAM HELPS CHILDREN OF VIETNAM VETERANS

Project Access is a new Arkansas statewide program which offers information and assistance to the families of Vietnam veterans who have children with disabilities.

Children born to U.S. Military personnel who served in or near Vietnam between 1961 and 1972 are eligible for the services of Project Access. The program serves individuals with any disability, including: learning or cognitive, physical, sensory (vision and hearing), or health related problems.

Referral to public and/or private agencies and organizations for financial aid, counseling, medical care, and other services are also offered. Veterans and their families work with a team of professionals to develop service plans which identify their goals for their children and other family members. The service coordinator helps to enable the family to meet these goals. Technical assistance is given to agencies to help them

understand and address veterans' family issues.

Project Access is a project of the University of Arkansas University Affiliated Program and the Arkansas Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program. Funding comes from the Agent Orange Class Assistance Program which was established to distribute a portion of the fund created by the settlement of the class action lawsuit by Vietnam veterans and their families against seven chemical companies which supplied herbicides used in the U.S. war effort in Vietnam. The Assistance Program provides funding for programs and services of benefit to Vietnam veterans and their families. For more information, write or call:

PROJECT ACCESS
University of Arkansas University
Affiliated Program
1120 Marshall, Suite 306
Little Rock, AR 72202
1-800-274-5437 Ext. 3760

THE VIDEO SPOTLIGHT

Road To Access - Travel For The Physically Challenged is a new video that has been added to the ASSCC Education & Resource Center. The video instructs potential travelers with disabilities and their companions in various methods and techniques for traveling by air, train and bus. This video also provides an opportunity to observe how to utilize different methods of transportation, and offers helpful suggestions to make your travel experience enjoyable, and encourage those who are hesitant to travel to try it.

Some general travel tips reviewed are:

1. Go through a travel agent but select one carefully.
2. When flying contact airlines to verify that you have a mobility impairment and that they can provide someone to assist you if necessary.
3. Always affix your name, address and phone number to your wheelchair.
4. Travel light.
5. Limit fluid intake prior to traveling.

General travel information may also be obtained by writing American Society of Travel Agents, P.O. Box 23992, Washington, D.C.

Resource and Education Center Expands

The Arkansas State Spinal Cord Commission has extended its Education and Resource Center statewide. In cooperation with the Paralyzed Veterans of America, mini regional resources centers have been set up at each ASSCC Case Management Office. Individuals with spinal cord injuries, professional health care staff, or other interested parties will be able to access resources and information pertaining to spinal cord disabilities a little closer to home. Although each regional education & resource center is presently limited to selected resource items, future plans are to increase resource material each year. Contact your area case manager for more information and a list of available resources.

SPINAL COURIER

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Commission Members:

Grover Evans - Jonesboro
Sloan Lessley - Calico Rock
Russell Patton - Jonesboro (Chair)
Glennis Sharp - North Little Rock
Sheila Galbraith Bronfman - Little Rock

FORWARDING AND RETURN
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REQUESTED



Leonard Rice Named Rehabilitant of the Year

Leonard Rice, Program Director and case manager of Work Alternatives, Inc. in Warren, Arkansas has been chosen Rehabilitant of the Year for the state of Arkansas. Rice was selected in statewide competition on the basis of achievement and community service.

Leonard is a C-4 quadriplegic who was injured in a motor vehicle crash in 1970. Since then Leonard has continued his education with a BA degree from Southern Illinois University and a Masters in counseling from UA at Fayetteville. Congratulations Leonard!

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